

Exhibit E

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CORONAVIRUS

'Every case except one was delta': UB scientists urge vaccines, masking as delta variant rages

'Every case except one was delta': UB scientists urge vaccines, masking as delta variant rages

by: [Nick Veronica](#)

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BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) – Scientists from the University at Buffalo are concerned how quickly the Covid-19 delta variant has spread through Western New York, saying nearly every single new case they genome sequenced in the past month was the delta variant.

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“What was really striking to me was that in May, of the cases we sequenced, 1 percent were delta, and in June 25 percent were delta. Then starting early July, every case except one was delta,” said Jennifer Surtees, Ph.D., who is the co-director of UB’s Genome, Environment and Microbiome Community of Excellence.

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Erie County's Covid positivity rate has seen a rapid rise over the past month. When the level of cases surpassed the CDC's benchmark for “substantial” transmission on July 31, the Health Department responding by requiring masks when indoors at any county building or facility, regardless of vaccination status – including Bills games at Highmark Stadium.

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	Fast / Days	Persons
7/3/2021	75	8.2
7/10/2021	68	7.4
7/17/2021	173	18.8
7/24/2021	297	32.3
7/31/2021	529	57.6
8/7/2021	650	70.7

“The fact that delta became dominant here so quickly tells us that the selective advantage of delta is dramatic,” Surtees said. “It’s the same virus but it’s a more robust version. This is how evolution works and it’s happening so quickly because people are continuing to be infected.

“The inability to contain this virus constitutes what is essentially a gigantic evolutionary experiment on a global scale,” Surtees added. “This virus will continue to evolve as long as significant numbers of people continue to get infected. Getting vaccinated and taking other mitigation measures like masking and social distancing are effective actions we can take to slow the spread of the virus and save lives.”

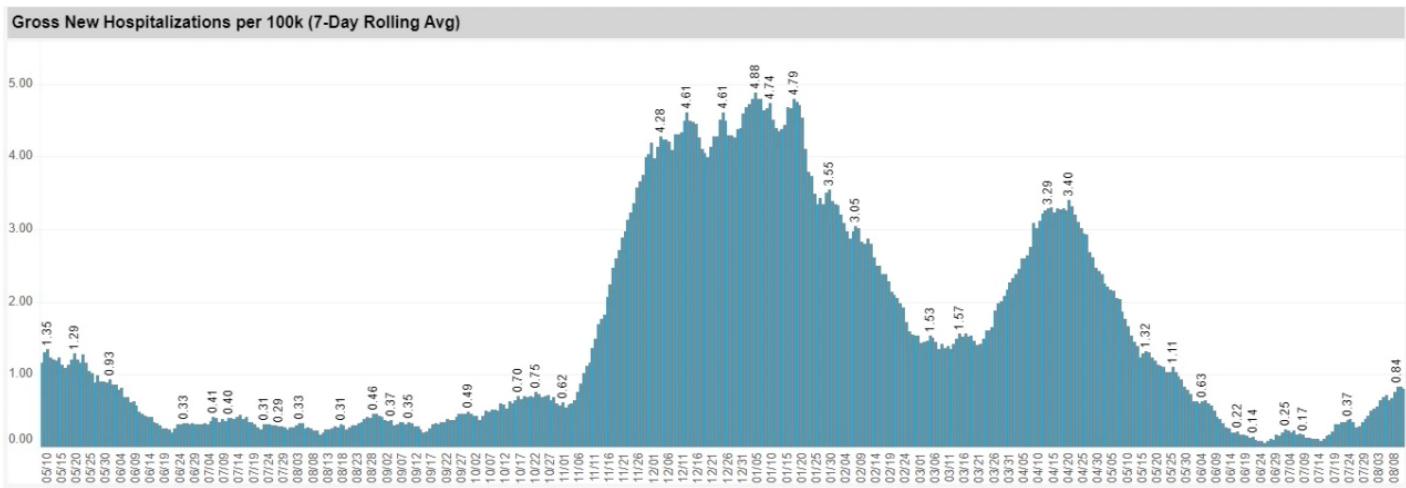
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The delta variant, first identified in India and known in the scientific community as B.1.617.2, spreads much faster than other variants and may cause more severe cases, according to the CDC. UB said the only case it sequenced recently that wasn’t delta was the variant known as B.1.621, which was first seen in Colombia and now represents about 10 percent of cases in South Florida.

“People infected with the delta variant are shedding about 1,000 times the viral load that people infected with earlier variants were shedding,” Surtees said. That’s why she and other scientists are recommending increased measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

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transmissible and we are still learning about it, it's important to add other mitigation approaches, such as masking and distancing, hand-washing, isolating, getting tested if you are symptomatic and avoiding large gatherings, especially indoors."



A graph of Western New York's hospitalizations per 100,000 residents shows what could be another wave of Covid.

"UB's sequencing efforts are an important part of our local and regional disease surveillance," Erie County Health Commissioner Gale Burstein said. "The delta variant's overwhelming prevalence in our area helps to explain the recent, exponential increase in Covid-19 cases and Covid-19-related hospitalizations. However, our area's relatively high vaccination rates have helped to counter the delta variant's higher transmissibility. I recommend that anyone who has not received the Covid-19 vaccine to get vaccinated. This will protect you, your family, and our community."

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Nick Veronica is a Buffalo native who joined the [News 4](#) team as a Digital Executive Producer in 2021. He previously worked at NBC Sports and The Buffalo News. You can follow Nick on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and find more of his work [here](#).

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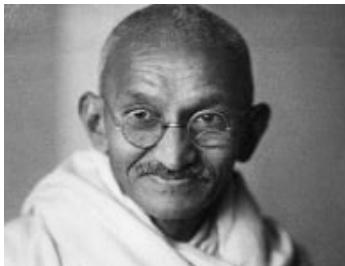
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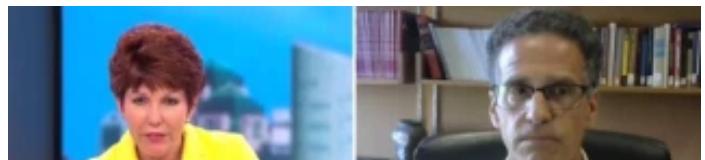
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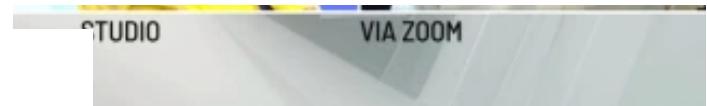


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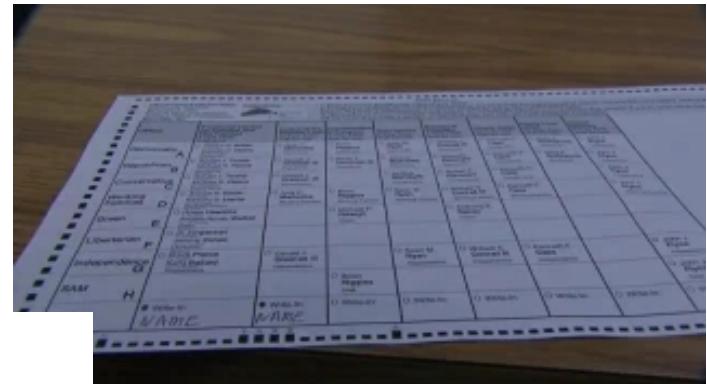
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